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Corps of Engineers proposes maintenance dredging of the Federal navigation channel in Bridgeport Harbor

CONCORD, Mass. – At the request of the Bridgeport Port Authority, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District is proposing to perform maintenance dredging of the Federal navigation channel in Bridgeport Harbor in Bridgeport, Conn. The Draft Environmental Assessment for this proposed work is available for review and public comment through March 26, 2010.

Bridgeport Harbor is located on the north shore of Long Island Sound between the cities of New Haven and Stamford, Conn. Goods transported through Bridgeport Harbor include coal, sand, gravel, stone, and petroleum projects.

The proposed project would re-establish the authorized 35-foot deep Mean Lower, Low Water (MLLW) Main Ship navigation channel from Long Island Sound to the inner harbor, the 18-foot deep MLLW navigation channel in the Pequonnock River, and the 18-foot deep MLLW navigation channel in Yellow Mill Creek, a tributary. In addition, the 35-foot deep MLLW and 25-foot deep MLLW east anchorages, the 18-foot deep MLLW west anchorage, and the 18-foot deep MLLW barge anchorage, as well as the 35-foot deep MLLW turning basin would also be restored to their authorized depths.

Approximately 1.78 million cubic yards of material would be dredged from the Federal navigation project (FNP) at Bridgeport Harbor. About 670,000 cubic yards of material has been determined to be suitable for open water placement. Of the remaining material, 913,000 cubic yards would be placed into a Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) cell that would be created within Bridgeport Harbor, and 197,000 cubic yards of material would be placed into an existing borrow pit located in Morris Cove in New Haven Harbor. Both CAD cells would be capped with suitable material from the outer portions of the FNP.

Most of the suitable material dredged from the FNP and the new CAD cell, about 1.25 million cubic yards, would be disposed at the Central Long Island Disposal Site (CLIS). The remaining suitable material, about 223,000 cubic yards, would be used to cap the Bridgeport Harbor CAD cell and the Morris Cove borrow pit. Approximately 38,000 cubic yards of material would be dredged to create an access channel to the Morris Cove borrow pit. This material would also be placed in the Morris Cove borrow pit. The total amount of material to be dredged from the proposed project is approximately 3.0 million cubic yards.

"Dredging is needed to restore the 35-foot deep Federal channel to authorized dimensions," said Project Manager Michael Keegan, of the Corps' New England District, Programs/Project Management Division. "The last maintenance dredging was done in 1964. Since then, shoaling has reduced the controlling depth in the

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Corps proposes Bridgeport Harbor dredging/2-2-2-2

navigation channels to between four and seven feet less than their authorized depths, creating a need for dredging.”

The proposed project is being coordinated with the following Federal, state and local agencies: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Nashantucket Pequot Tribe, the Mohegan Tribe, the state of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (Department of Marine Fisheries and Office of Long Island Sound), the Connecticut Bureau of Aquaculture, the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer, the Bridgeport Port Authority and the New Haven Port Authority.

The public notice for this proposed work, with more detailed information, is available for review on the Corps website at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil>. Select “navigation” and then “public notices” or go directly to the link at: <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/navigation/pubnot2.asp>. The Draft Environmental Assessment, the Draft Bridgeport Dredge Material Management Plan (DMMP), and the public notice are available for review on the projects page under Bridgeport Dredge Material Management Plan at: <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/projects.asp>.

Public comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment or this proposed work should be forwarded no later than March 26, 2010 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Programs/Project Management Division (ATTN: Mr. Michael Keegan), 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751 or by email to michael.f.keegan@usace.army.mil.

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